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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON DHS' RESPONSE TO HURRICANE
KATRINA VICTIMS, OCTOBER 4, 2005

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" on 10/3 entitled "Nerve-wracking." "Crescencio Arcos, Director of International Affairs of the Department of Internal Security of the United States, known as 'Homeland Security,' has offered a statement to the national press in regard to the treatment received by those displaced by Hurricane Katrina, hundreds of them Hondurans who lived in the southern communities of the United States."

"With regard to the actions taken by the federal government to assist the thousands of Hispanics who were affected by Katrina, Ambassador Arcos said to La Tribuna, 'To reach the large Hispanic and Vietnamese populations in the Gulf coast region, DHS and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) have deployed a number of Community Relations Officers and Public Affairs Officers who are multilingual to aid the victims in finding and applying for assistance'."

"There has been some tension among the Spanish-speaking population that the U.S. authorities will deport all undocumented aliens to their country of origin. On this issue Arcos said, 'U.S. government officers will not routinely verify the immigration status of individuals seeking emergency assistance as a result of Katrina or any other natural disaster.' These statements have cleared up some of the doubts held by those who might have been affected by deportations."

"Without a doubt, the timely declarations of Ambassador Arcos have calmed the anxiety that has prevailed amongst hurricane victims, who can now benefit from the services provided by hurricane shelters without the fear that they will be captured, put in a plane and sent back."

Williard